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Letters to The Times

Placing Blame

As an avid consumer of Conrad cartoons I was shocked to see CIA Director William Casey's face on the bottom right-hand Wanted Poster of terrorists (April 23), along with that of Moammar Kadhafi, the Ayatollah Khomeini and Yasser Arafat. Why wasn't President Reagan's face on that poster? Why put the blame on Casey, who, after all, is only following orders?

Reagan signed the authorization for \$19 million in covert operations against Nicaragua, and also authorized the mining of Nicaragua's harbors, violating both the Neutrality Act and the international laws pertaining to the rights of freedom of the seas. Shifting the blame for this to Casey is tantamount to admitting that the President does not have control over the CIA. If this is the case, we might as well abolish the organs of our representative government and end the charades.

However, this is not the case. The CIA takes its orders directly from the White House, and only the President has complete security clearance for all intelligence branches. It never ceases to amaze me how the President can get by without substantive criticism of his policies. But I almost forgot: It is an election year, and how better it is for the chief of the CIA to appear as a representative of "state" terrorism than for the head of state who wishes to exude the appearance of a peacemaker. What really frightens me though is that possibly more than a few buy these shifts of appearances because they want to.

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